



WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF OPTOMETRY

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April 2, 2020

Mac Warner, The Honorable Secretary of State
Secretary of State's Office – Administrative Law
Bldg. 1, Suite 157-K
1900 Kanawha Blvd E
Charleston, WV 25305

FILED
2020 APR - 6 P 2:36
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WEST VIRGINIA

Re: West Virginia Board of Optometry
Temporary Suspension of W. Va. Code R. § 14-10-3.2.c

Dear Secretary of State Warner:

The Honorable Governor of the State of West Virginia, Jim Justice, has declared a State of Emergency to address the emergency created by the worldwide coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. In a Proclamation issued March 16, 2020, the Governor delegated to "all state agencies the ability to suspend rules, if strict compliance therewith would in any way prevent, hinder or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency."

The West Virginia Board of Optometry ("Board") is actively monitoring the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Board is dedicated to fulfilling its primary mission of protecting the public during this time, while continuing to ensure that West Virginia has the workforce it needs to treat and care for optometry patients throughout the State.

At an emergency meeting held March 27, 2020, and pursuant to the Governor's Proclamation, the Board voted to temporarily suspend its rule limiting the number of continuing education (CE) hours that may be obtained by correspondence, the internet, or other electronic means, W. Va. Code R. § 14-10-3.2.c. The suspension of this rule applies only to the CE reporting period of July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2020.

Therefore, during this CE reporting period, a licensee of the Board may complete all of the required 43 hours via correspondence, the internet, or other electronic means. The Board finds it necessary and appropriate to temporarily suspend this rule in response to the COVID-19 outbreak and in order to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

In communicating this decision to its licensees, the Board has noted that the remaining provisions of W. Va. Code R. § 14-10-3 are unaffected and still apply. The Board has also issued instructions for submitting online CE credits.

The Board would respectfully request that the Secretary of State's Office accept this correspondence as notice of the temporary suspension of W. Va. Code R. § 14-10-3.2.c and post a copy of this correspondence on its website.

MISSION STATEMENT

To ensure that all applicants for licensure and all Doctors of Optometry currently licensed, practice their profession in a manner that benefits and protects the public, and to ensure that the highest quality optometric eye and vision care is provided in a professional, competent, and ethical manner.

Should you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please contact the Board's office by telephone, 304-558-5901, or by email, wvbdopt@frontier.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Carper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "P." and the last name "Carper" clearly distinguishable.

Pamela Carper
Executive Director
West Virginia Board of Optometry